

A PASTORAL APPROACH TO THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to put forward some pastoral guidelines which will help ministers of mainline churches to deal constructively with members of their congregations who are involved in the charismatic renewal.

These pastoral guidelines are derived from the theory that it is not the experience which is divisive but rather the theology and interpretation which surrounds the charismatic's experience. Hence, in order to deal constructively with the charismatic renewal the pastor must affirm the individual's religious experience, and help the individual to interpret his/her experience in the light of sound theology.

Also included in this paper is an attempt to investigate the causes which have helped to create tension between the charismatic renewal and historic churches: to define what the charismatic renewal is; to look at the psychology of speaking in tongues; and to put forward a theology of the Holy Spirit according to the Apostle Paul.

This paper was written from information gathered in published literature, private interviews, and personal experience.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Once a week a small group gathers for a weekly prayer meeting in the home of a prominent lawyer. During one of the meetings, the hostess, a woman of quiet disposition, speaks three sentences in an unknown tongue, which are followed by three sentences of English. Soon the woman's pastor hears reports of this phenomenon. The next Sunday, a bitter polemic is launched from the pulpit against the gifts. The family endures for a short time before seeking spiritual fellowship elsewhere.

A Roman Catholic priest begins to hold cottage prayer meetings in his parish. Then two people speak out in prophecy. The priest soon encounters some difficulties with his superiors about such practices.

A Presbyterian minister is thrown out of his church for allowing the manifestations of spiritual gifts in the Sunday service. An Anglican priest is quick to announce that these manifestations are of Satan. Because of this, a wealthy businessman pulls out of his congregation to begin his own prayer meetings.

Large crowds begin to gather at churches that welcome charismatic manifestations, but they do little proselyting. Most of the visitors report back to their home congregations, witnessing to these manifestations.

Those exhibiting these gifts of the Holy Spirit cause sudden excitement in a society bored with dry theological commentaries. A spate of publications pours forth from the press, personal testimonies, ecclesiastical advice, and theological opinion. Churches who have a history of placid decorum are suddenly called by their officials to man the ramparts against the tide of fanaticism.

One soon loses count of all the theories and explanations for glossolalia, the technical name for speaking in tongue, which tends to attract the most attention from the public. Some linguists declare that glossolalia is no language or dialect with which they are familiar. A minister, though he does not speak in tongue, believes it to be of God. He sees it opening new dimensions in worship.

The practice of 'tithing' becomes widely practiced in churches who practice or profess a belief in the spiritual gifts. This arouses some attention, but no real opposition. Those who are involved in the movement come from all levels of society, many of the leaders are upper class men of culture, educated, and of some social importance. Some church leaders criticize and condemn the movement openly; others try to dispose of it quietly, by replacing the ministers who support it. Some allow it a limited, yet somewhat uneasy acceptance.

Those who have any measure of experience in the

present day charismatic movement would have no trouble in supplying names, dates and places to the events just described, add or subtract a detail or two. Though these events are historically true, they did not occur in the 1960's or 1970's. They took place around 1830, in England, Scotland, and Germany.¹

As in the 1830's, the manifestations of spiritual gifts still attract much attention from the public. And unfortunately today, as in the 1830's, the Church as a whole still does not quite know where to place such irrational experiences, nor does it know quite how to handle such enthusiasms. So, as in the 1830's, and throughout the history of the Western world, today the charismatic renewal is arousing a placid society from its somber sleep to heated debates and often to violent opposition to its practices. The new wave of enthusiasm known to many as the new-Pentecostalism or the charismatic renewal, is perhaps the most criticized and defended, yet least understood movement in recent Church history.²

But does this state of unrest need to persist? Does this movement of charismatic renewal, and other movements like it, need to continue to sharply divide and

¹Larry Christenson, A MESSAGE TO THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT (Minneapolis: Dimension Books, 1972), pp. 11-14.

²Erling Jorstad, THE HOLY SPIRIT IN TODAY'S CHURCH (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1973), p. 5.

paralyze congregations and denominations as it has in the past? This author believes it does not. Rather it is time that the Church as a whole stop and, after divorcing itself from its prejudices, take a fresh new look at the fundamental questions raised by this movement. And from its evaluation come up with a mature way of reacting to this charismatic renewal. Fortunately, in the past few years this has begun to take place. More and more books, and articles are being published which serve to describe the characteristics of this charismatic renewal. But unfortunately, it appears that relatively little is being done to project guidelines which can aid pastors of mainline denominations to respond to charismatics who emerge within their congregations. Because of this, it is this author's aim to put forward in this paper some pastoral guidelines which will help ministers of mainline churches to deal constructively with members of their congregations who are taking part in this current wave of enthusiasm.³

³While the intention of this paper will be to give pastoral help to ministers who have charismatics within their churches, this paper will not touch upon how a non-charismatic congregation can constructively respond to its minister if he/she were to become charismatic, and was bent upon turning the church into a charismatic congregation. This is not because such a situation is not worth investigating, for surely it is. Rather it is being side-stepped because different churches would need to handle the situation according to their own denomination's policy.

Before seeking guidelines which will help resolve some of the tensions raised by the Neo-Pentecostal movement it is important that we first examine some of the causes that have given rise to much of the negative feelings towards the charismatic renewal movement. These causes fall into two main categories: Those produced by those outside the charismatic renewal, and those which originate from within the renewal movement. Let us first look at those problems which find their source coming from those outside the charismatic phenomenon.

The consternation raised by the current charismatic renewal is nothing new. "This suspicion is bred of an historical experience as old as Christianity - an experience which we might justifiably describe as the Catholic experience of 'divisive enthusiasm.' Such ... divisive enthusiastic movements have troubled the Christian community ever since its birth."⁴ Such movements include Montanism, Donatism, the Waldenses, the Cathari, the Anabaptists, Jansenism, Quietism, the Convulsionaries, Quakerism, the Camisards, the Moravians, Methodism, Revivalism, and Pentecostalism.⁵

Knox, in his study of enthusiasms within the church points out that such movements tend to follow a discern-

⁴Donald L. Gelpi, PENTECOSTALISM: A THEOLOGICAL VIEWPOINT (New York: Paulist Press, 1971), p. 6.

⁵Ibid., pp. 8-34

able pattern. First, "they begin with the formation of a spiritual elite whose intolerance of religious imperfection in less enlightened Christians inevitably turns inward, producing the increasing fragmentation of the elite itself."⁶ Secondly, these enthusiasts perceive the world in dualistic terms. Such a Gnostic suspicion of "matter" and of "nature" demands not the graced transformation of man but the replacement of man's corrupt material nature by a transcendent divine life."⁷ Thirdly, this Gnostic mind-set reinforces the need and fascination with the ecstatic. This cultivation of religious experiences, which is sometimes bazaar in nature inclines the enthusiast "to an anti-institutionalism which often culminates in the attempt to found an ideal theocratic society in which God rules consciences directly..."⁸ And fourthly, the enthusiast "delights in predicting God's immanent destruction of the present world order and the immanence of the millennium."⁹

Even though Donald Gelpi, in his book Pentecostalism: A Theological Viewpoint, points out that

⁶Ibid., p. 6.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid

those familiar with the present charismatic phenomenon know that these characteristics of "divisive enthusiasms" are not widespread within the charismatic renewal), there are those within the Church, (especially those with a sense of Church history), who greet the charismatic renewal with alarm. Conscious that the Church's experience with "divisive enthusiasm" has been a negative one, they fear this latest claim of a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit may be but the product of another spiritual schism within the Christian community.¹⁰

The caution raised in many thoughtful church people by past movements of "divisive enthusiasms" within Christendom are not the only reasons which have created apprehension towards today's charismatic occurrence. Killian McDonnell, in an article entitled "The Holy Spirit and Pentecostalism," published in *Commonweal* magazine (November 8, 1968) mentions several other elements which have given birth to many of the negative reactions to the present Neo-Pentecostal phenomenon.

McDonnell mentions that one of the prime causes for a lack of sympathy towards the new charismatic renewal is due to the "dearth of critical studies by those who have studied in some depth the movement within the classical

¹⁰ Ibid.

Pentecostalism and historic churches.¹¹ Because of this, pastors and commissions set up to study the problem are either handicapped because they cannot or will not do the primary research themselves, or because there is not available sufficient "scholarly research to draw upon." "The result is that judgments are made with only superficial knowledge."¹²

Another source which leads to a negative reaction to the charismatic renewal is the fear of religious experience. Confront a "lay person, priest, bishop or religious superior with an abstract theological statement he will consider its orthodoxy dispassionately. But ... face him with a religious experience he panics."¹³ "One side claims that if a person has no 'feeling,' his faith is rather artificial. The other side looks with suspicion on the instability of emotion. One side is afraid of intellectualizing - the other side is super-critical of anything that cannot be described, defined, and tested by rational procedures."¹⁴

Along somewhat these same lines, Mc Donnell also

¹¹Kilian McDonnell, "Holy Spirit and Pentecostalism," COMMONWEAL MAGAZINE, LXXXIX: 6, (November 8, 1968), 203

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid

¹⁴William G. Olson, THE CHARISMATIC CHURCH (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1974), pp. 27-28.

mentions that other obstacles which stand in the way of an objective evaluation of today's charismatic occurrence is the existence of socially acceptable behavior. "If one proceeds on the assumption that what is not socially acceptable, ... not worthy of a mature person, then social acceptability becomes the ultimate norm."¹⁵ And for a vast majority of Americans, practices such as glossolalia, prophesying, and interpreting the Bible are not socially acceptable forms of behavior, no matter what worth or faults they may have.¹⁶

McDonnell also suggests that much of these negative reactions to the charismatic renewal is a reaction to the very nature of the charismatic gifts or experience. Although we can study and learn of these gifts and experiences psychologically, sociologically, and even see their economic implications, "the ultimate spiritual reality eludes such methods."¹⁷ As a result, those who seek to understand the charismatic experience in purely scientific terms will be greatly disappointed: "the spiritual gifts can only be (ultimately) discerned spiritually, in the function of the kingdom of Christ."¹⁸

¹⁵McDonnell, p. 203

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

No doubt the most formidable obstacle, says McDonnell is the public image of classical Pentecostalism, and the tendency to associate the charismatic renewal with classical Pentecostalism. Because of this poor image, classical and neo-Pentecostalism hardly ever receive a just hearing. In the public's mind Pentecostalism of any kind "conjures up images of emotional fanaticism, religious mania, illiteracy, messianism, credulity, and panting after miracles."¹⁹ To some extent historical evidence supports this view, but for large segments of Pentecostalism this does not reflect reality. McDonnell writes, "It no more reflects the true nature of Pentecostalism than the Inquisition, the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, or Alexander VI reflect the essential quality of Catholicism, although all belong to Catholic history."²⁰

Even though Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement are not synonymous, (this difference will be discussed in the next chapter), the charismatic phenomenon, as it is found within the historic churches, is often associated with classical Pentecostalism. Thus the bad image which some have of classical Pentecostalism is extended to the charismatic renewal, creating unjustifiable opposition for this renewal movement.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

McDonnell does not stand alone in seeing this association of Pentecostalism and the charismatic renewal as being the source of numerous difficulties and barriers in coming to a proper and realistic understanding of the charismatic phenomenon as it is found within the historical churches. Richard Quebedeaux, author of The Young Evangelicals; Erling Jorstad, writer of The Holy Spirit in Today's Church; William Olson, author of The Charismatic Church; Donald Gelpi, author of Pentecostalism: A Theological View Point; and many other writers and correspondents make the same observation.

The fear is that the same divisiveness and fragmentation which accompanied the rise of Pentecostalism at the turn of the Twentieth century in America will reappear in mainline denominational churches through the charismatic occurrence.²¹ It is also feared that the anti-intellectualism of the early classical Pentecostals, with its literal, proof-texting approach to the Scriptures is also a part of the charismatic movement. And there are those who associate the pietism of the classical Pentecostals, which divides the world into a kind of Gnostic world of matter and spirit, with the charismatic renewal. Still others associate the elitism of

²¹Ibid.

Pentecostalism with the charismatic renewal.²² Fortunately these fears are unfounded. As a whole, the charismatic renewal movement is far removed from these classical Pentecostal traits.²³

Not all the divisiveness can be blamed on the opponents of the charismatic renewal. The charismatics also have some responsibility.

Many charismatics exaggerate the importance of their experiences. They alienate outsiders by allowing themselves to become inflated by their experiences. Some seem to believe they are "God's gift" to the world, and isolate themselves from the rest of society and become suspicious towards the Church as a whole.

Another source of conflict, that sometimes emerges from inside the charismatic renewal, is the lack of a proper theological interpretation. Many enthusiasms have gone sour because they have refused to interpret their experience in the light of sound theology. When a charismatic begins to feel that his/her experience defies interpretation, conflict is just around the corner. Without a proper interpretation the experience becomes an

²²Richard Quebedeaux, THE YOUNG EVANGELICALS: REVOLUTION IN ORTHODOXY (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), p. 44.
Gelpi; pp. 35-36.

²³Quebedeaux; p. 44.
Gelpi; p. 7.
McDonnell; p. 203.

end in itself. It becomes the yardstick by which all other experiences are judged. Thus the individual who has not shared the same experience as the charismatic is viewed with suspicion. And since the Church as a whole may not share the same experience as the charismatic, the Church is seen as being imperfect and heretical.

With this survey of the causes which have given rise to much of the tension and opposition to the charismatic renewal before us... the first basis from which we will build our pastoral guidelines²⁴ is that pastors, and laity alike, must make an effort to seek first-hand knowledge of the charismatic phenomenon, and avoid making judgments until this has been done. By doing this, the church will be better prepared to deal constructively with this renewal.

Secondly, taking seriously the lessons history has to offer the Church about "divisive enthusiasms," it should be realized that many a "divisive enthusiasm" started not because the experience itself was "unhealthy" but because it was not interpreted properly.²⁵ Therefore, to guard against the possibility of the charismatic movement becoming divisive and causing fragmentation the Church,

²⁴These pastoral guidelines will be discussed at length in chapter #5 - "Pastoral Guidelines."

²⁵Gelpi; p. 42 (8-34).

rather than rejecting the charismatic renewal, should embrace the renewal and help give it a firm and proper foundation on which to stand. "The issue lies in the interpretation of the nature and consequences of the charismatic experience. For that interpretation informs the experience itself and gives it a specific character and teleological thrust."²⁶

In short, the Church normally does not distinguish between the charismatic experience and the theology used to explain the experience. Thus, rather than seeing the experience as healthy and from God, we discredit the person by not confirming his/her experience. The conflict stems not from the experience as such but from misunderstanding, and from the theology often used to express and define the charismatic experience. Therefore the solution to the problem requires that the Church come to a proper and realistic understanding as to what the charismatic renewal is, rather than basing its judgments on outdated generalizations; and that it help the charismatic renewal to interpret itself in the light of proper theological thinking.

²⁶Ibid., p. 40.

CHAPTER II

THE CHARISMATIC RENEWAL: WHAT IS IT?

In the last chapter we investigated the numerous questions and fears which have given birth to the often hostile clashes between those active within the charismatic renewal and the historical churches; in this chapter it will be our task to examine just what the charismatic renewal is.

A. The Road To The Irrational

Today our Western world is thirsting for an encounter with the numinous that will occur at the gut level, rather than a purely intellectual encounter which leaves emotions untouched.

This rising tide of interest in the irrational has ushered in many weird and bizarre movements. One of these movements was spearheaded by Timothy Leary, who felt LSD was the way to achieve a level of deeper self-awareness, thus touching the numinous in an encounter no book could give. Others have turned to the occult, which has grown astronomically, in their effort to touch the unseen.¹

Still others, returning from occupational duties in Japan, 'police action' in Korea, and from a war in Vietnam, are flooding our Western World with the philosophies of the

¹Walker I. Knight, THE WEIRD WORLD OF THE OCCULT (New York: Tyndale, 1972), pp. 7-9.

East, that teach one how to experience that which lies beyond, or more correctly, that which lies within. For many Christians of the Western World, the charismatic renewal has opened the door for a personal encounter with the Risen Christ. Many have taken and are taking to the road, leaving their security behind, seeking to discover what the libraries of books cannot teach, and mathematical equations cannot describe.

One cannot help but ask, as he sees the mass of pilgrims traveling down the various roads, what has caused such a pilgrimage to take place? Especially within the borders of a culture that is bubbling over with scientific advancements that are opening the doors to new horizons, holding the promise of adventure and challenge. Many can be heard echoing the cry, "Who could ask for more?"

At the turn of the twentieth century, our country was engulfed in a movement of massive social change. This "Progressive era" had popularized the assumption that education was the cure to all of man's problems. The road to a utopian society, a heaven on earth, lay within the structure of formal education. With this notion came the push for advancements within the public educational system. A country once again, as its forefathers had done, centered its efforts on developing institutions of higher learning. Science and the era of the rational reached to new heights.

But a new generation is waking up to the startling reality that even though we can put men on the moon, and sail the depths of the oceans; war, hatred, poverty and killing still exist. Students graduating from our colleges and universities are often shocked at the discrepancies between what is taught in the classrooms and the way things really are, between the theoretical and the practical.

The most affluent and most educated society the world has ever seen has failed to produce its dream world. Instead it has built a society so complicated, it takes extraordinary strength just to endure, while the same society has "produced the very opposite in the character of men."² A disenchanted society soon started the pendulum swinging from the rational and logical to an irrational encounter with the numinous.

B. The Emergence of the Christian Charismatic Movement

For many Christians, the pendulum that swung towards an emotional encounter with the unseen, has come within the boundaries of the charismatic renewal. The focal point of the charismatic movement is usually an experience called "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." Often the phenomenon of speaking in tongues, or glossolalia, is experienced by those receiving the "baptism of the Holy

²Lewis J. Sherill, THE STRUGGLE OF THE SOUL (New York: Macmillan, 1959), p. 1.

Spirit." It is this, glossolalia, that has received the most criticism from the public. Because of this, the many outside Pentecostal circles who spoke in tongues before 1960, concealed their practice from others, and only used this "private prayer language" in seclusion. For this reason the public, for many years, was virtually unaware of its practice within many main line Protestant churches. But in the year 1960, a series of explosive events caused the phenomenon of glossolalia to become the center of many reports, and the target of violent criticism.

This explosion centered around Father Dennis Bennett, who is a graduate of the University of Chicago, and Chicago Theological Seminary. In 1953 he took over the struggling St. Marks Episcopal church in Van Nuys. "Under his leadership the church grew steadily until it had a membership of 2600 and a staff of four clergymen."³

In the early days of 1960 Father Bennett received word from a fellow priest, who had been observing something mysterious in his parish. Two of his parishioners were showing an amazing degree of change. When investigating the sudden change from what he once thought were token Christians, to active and enthusiastic Christians, he learned that the couple had received what they called the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," and also had

³John Sherrill, THEY SPEAK IN OTHER TONGUES (New York: Spire Books, 1964), p. 61.

been given the gift of speaking in tongues. Father Bennett and one of his fellow priests were invited to the parishioners' house for a prayer meeting. Interested in learning more about this phenomenon, they accepted the invitation. As a result of this meeting, Father Bennett received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," and the gift of speaking in tongues.⁴

Soon afterwards, people in Bennett's own church started asking about the change they were witnessing in him. It was not long before some seventy members of his parish prayed for and received the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." Two out of the four priests in his parish also received the "baptism." Unfortunately, the two who did not have this experience were deeply opposed to it, and a serious rift began to develop within the parish. Father Bennett felt something had to be done to save his parish. So in order to allow none of the members to be "out of the know," on April 3, 1960, he told his story from the pulpit. For many this was too much, and an associate priest left the chancel in protest. After the service, the church treasurer suggested it might be more appropriate for Father Bennett to resign. In order to save the church, Father Bennett then resigned.⁵

⁴Morton T. Kelsey, TONGUE SPEAKING (New York: Waymark Books, 1968), pp. 78-100

⁵John Sherrill, pp. 61-62

"Newspapers carried the story the next day. The wire service picked it up. Overnight the story swept the country: Speaking in tongues had appeared in a decent, ordinary church, and had caused strife, division and dissension. Time carried the story. So did Newsweek."⁶

About the same time Father Bennett's ordeal was taking place, the senior editor of Guidepost, John Sherill, was in the process of writing a book about the phenomenon of speaking in tongues. Before April 3, 1960, he was lucky if he received any replies to his hundreds of letters, asking for individual testimonies about their baptism experience. But once Father Bennett's story hit the headlines, Sherill writes, "I could scarcely keep up with the flood of mail from people who wanted to tell me their experiences and sign their names to them."⁷ People wrote him from every walk of life.

With the emergence of the Van Nuys story, the charismatic renewal surfaced for all to see. Morton T. Kelsey reported in 1960 that there were well over two million tongue-speakers within the Pentecostal churches, plus an uncounted number within the mainline Protestant churches.⁸ In 1970, according to Michael Harper, there

⁶Ibid., p. 62

⁷Ibid., p. 63

⁸Kelsey, p. 203.

were at least forty thousand Roman Catholics involved.⁹ And Bob Whitaker, a prominent charismatic renewal leader says this group has tripled every year in the past four years.¹⁰ Frederick Bruner calls the charismatic renewal the fastest growing segment of the Church today.¹¹

C. The Charismatic Renewal vs Pentecostalism

Many have identified this recent emergence of enthusiasm with classical Pentecostalism. Even though the charismatic renewal does share some similarities with the Pentecostal world, their differences outweigh their similarities.

Whereas Pentecostalism has always been associated with the lower socio-economic groups, the charismatic renewal has most of its rank-and-file in the highest socio-economic groups. People such as doctors, lawyers, university professors, business executives, and other people of wealth and education can be found in large numbers among the charismatic renewal.¹² While the

⁹"Baptism in the Spirit," Transmit Magazine, No.2 (September 1970).

¹⁰Bob Whittaker, private interview.

¹¹Federick D. Bruner, A THEOLOGY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1970).

¹²Kilian McDonnell, "Holy Spirit and Pentecostalism," COMMONWEAL MAGAZINE, LXXXIX: (November 8, 1968), 203.
Erling Jorstad, THE HOLY SPIRIT IN TODAY'S CHURCH (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1973), p. 5.

classical Pentecostal churches tend to be very dogmatic especially about the insistence that all must speak in tongues, and the meaning of the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," the charismatic renewal allows for theological divergence.¹³

Protestants and Catholics, conservatives and liberals do not automatically discard their own theological and ecclesiastical differences when they come together in this movement. Nor do the movements' leaders themselves agree on the precise definition of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Protestant Neo-Pentecostals, for instance, often view the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as a 'second work of the grace' after conversion, or as a special infilling of the Holy Spirit already living in the believer. Roman Catholics, on the other hand, look at the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as an interior experience (usually with outward manifestations) of the Spirit's filling and transforming power in the life of a believer who has received the Holy Spirit through the sacrament of water baptism. The exact nature of the charismata and their operation, as outlined in I Corinthians 12-14 is also debated.¹⁴

By allowing each individual to interpret his/her experience in the light of his/her own theological background, the charismatic renewal has avoided many of the costly mistakes made by the earlier Pentecostals.¹⁵

This freedom to interpret your charismatic experience in the light of your own church background has also allowed the charismatic individual to stay active

¹³ Erling Jorstad, THE HOLY SPIRIT IN TODAY'S CHURCH (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1973), p. 5.

¹⁴ Richard Quebedeaux, THE YOUNG EVANGELICALS: REVOLUTION IN ORTHODOXY (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1944), p. 44.

¹⁵ Jorstad, p. 19.

within his/her present church, and has also led to greater ecumenical harmony on the grass-root level. Before the emergence of the charismatic renewal, the theological and dogmatic demands forced upon the individual by the Pentecostal churches made it nearly impossible to remain a part of one's former tradition. But today this has all changed. Members of the renewal movement find no problem in remaining loyal to their denomination. Charismatics follow the "established liturgical order when worshipping in their own congregations, rather than the older Pentecostal practice of spontaneous contributions at any given point. The new participants cultivate the 'Spirit-led' services at their midweek meetings."¹⁶

This freedom of theological diversity has also allowed the charismatics to seek ecumenical unity, instead of being divided in character, as in the earlier Pentecostal churches. Although this union is not engineered from the top by Ecumenical planners, the sharing of their common experiences have allowed people from numerous traditions to come together. Michael Harper states, "that this movement is the most unifying in Christendom today ... for only in this movement are all streams uniting, and all ministries being accepted and practised."¹⁷

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁷ Quebedeaux, p. 43

And lastly, another difference between the two enthusiasms, is that the classical Pentecostal churches are much more emotional in character. Pentecostalism considers experiences of emotional excess to be a direct sign of God's dealing with the individual; thus emotional experiences are highly sought after. But for the charismatic renewal, emotional excess is firmly controlled. The Neo-Pentecostals consider the proper emotional expression to be one of joy and celebration.¹⁸

Even though both Pentecostalism and the charismatic renewal are experience centered, the two have many differences, and, as we have just seen, should not be identified. But if the charismatic movement is not to be identified with classical Pentecostalism, then how is it to be classified? This is not an easy question to answer. Because of the charismatic renewal's theological diversity it is impossible to define the renewal movement in purely theological categories. And although the charismatic renewal is experiential in nature, it is impossible to translate the movement adequately by any one religious experience such as glossolalia, healing, prophesy, etc. though it may sound obscure, the charismatic renewal is probably best described as a desire to have a vivid experience of God as a person: to allow God to demonstrate

¹⁸Jorstad, p. 22.

His reality to the individual in a deep personal way.¹⁹

The charismatic renewal is a movement which seeks to close the gap between rationalism, on the one side, and experience of the divine, on the other. Neo-Pentecostalism is a movement which seeks to experience what the text-books speak of: the Risen Christ.

Because the charismatic renewal is experience oriented, it would be worth our while to investigate what this experience is. Especially since this aspect of the charismatic renewal seems to cause the most suspicion.

¹⁹Quebedeaux, p. 43.

CHAPTER III

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES

In this chapter it will be our goal to investigate the charismatic experience. Even though there are many experiences which could be defined as a "charismatic experience," we will limit this examination to glossolalia. This is for two reasons: (1) Tongue speaking is the most normative of all charismatic experiences; and (2) because tongue speaking generates the most suspicion among non-charismatics and is the least understood.

A. Glossolalia

The technical term for speaking in tongues is glossolalia. Glossolalia is derived from the Greek words, glossa, which means the tongue, and lalein, which means to talk. It's literal translation is "to speak with the tongue."¹ Today it has come to signify an experience in which one seemingly speaks a language he/she has never learned, "or a series of sounds not known to be speech of any group on earth."² In Webster's unabridged Third New

¹John P. Kildahl, THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 11.

²Ibid

International Dictionary, glossolalia is defined as, "ecstatic speech that is usually unintelligible to hearers." The unabridged Random House Dictionary defines it as, "a prayer characterized chiefly by uncomprehensible speech." Charles Francis Potter, in the following quotation from his book The Faiths Men Live By, associates tongue speaking with frenzied forgetfulness of self. "Speaking with tongue is rapid, ecstatic speech, usually unintelligible even to the speaker, but sometimes explained by one who has another Pentecostal gift, that of interpretation. Evidence of the descent of the Holy Spirit is seen by Pentecostals in the bodily rhythmic or spasmodic movements common at country revivals and camp meetings ..."³ John Short, writes that "students of psychology of religion have noted (glossolalia), and describe it in terms of the release of strong emotions which cannot find satisfying expression in more normal ways ... (it is) an innocuous way of letting off superfluous spiritual steam."⁴

If one were to listen to a person speaking in tongues, he would hear an effortless flow, usually in a complex structure, with the repetition and inflection

³Charles F. Potter, THE FAITHS MEN LIVE BY (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-hall, 1954), p. 301

⁴John Short, "The first Epistle to the Corinthian 1 Expositic," THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1951-55), X:155.

characteristic of language."⁵ Though the speaker sounds as if he is speaking fluently in a language, the speech is neither controlled nor directed by the speaker.⁶

How a tongue-speaker would view his speaking is best stated by some "gifted persons," who were associated with the Irvingite movement in 1830, who declared, "that their organs of speech are made use of by the spirit of God, and that they utter what is given them and not the expression of their own conceptions, or their own interpretation."⁷ Tongue-speakers declare that one cannot be coached into speaking. Those who speak in tongue either receive the gift immediately when within a group, or when they are alone with God. Tongue speakers are quick to point out the fact that it is by faith, prayer and the Word (Bible) that one is bestowed with such a gift. Thus the term "gift" is used rather than skill or talent when referring to glossolalia.⁸ Tongue speakers also claim, and such reports have been verified by psychologists, that once a person possesses this gift, he retains it and can speak fluently whenever and wherever he

⁵Morton T. Kelsey, TONGUE SPEAKING (New York: Spir Books, 1964), p. 1.

⁶Ibid.

⁷James Clarke, EDWARD IRVING AND HIS CIRCLE AND DRUMMOND (London: Clarke), p. 152.

⁸Kildahl, p. 10.

chooses.⁹

Those who exercise the gift of glossolalia often report that they feel an assuring amount of contentment settle over them as they speak. The experience brings them peace, joy and inner harmony. Glossolalists see this as an answer to prayer, "an assurance of divine love and acceptance."¹⁰

Dr. John P. Kildahl, of New York Theological Seminary, points out that glossolalia is not restricted to Christians. Such ecstatic utterances are found in early Egyptian writings. Also similar accounts that seem to be related to glossolalia are recorded by Plutarch and Virgil. Many claim that the prophecies found in the oracles of Delphi, Dodona and Epirus have characteristics that would make them appear to be glossolalia.¹¹

It is really not surprising to find account of what appears to be glossolalia, or ecstatic speech written throughout history by people of various backgrounds and of different faiths. But one must be careful not to categorize all reports of ecstatic speech as being related to the phenomenon of tongue speaking which is found within the Christian Charismatic movement of today. Though there

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid

may be many documented cases of ecstatic speech, they may differ greatly in cause and in nature. For example, it is not uncommon to hear a person who is mentally ill speak ecstatically. Though the person may sound just as if he were a tongue-speaking Neo-Pentecostal, there is a tremendous difference. When a schizophrenic speaks in tongues, his body will become stiff and his muscles tight, whereas with religious tongues (that of the Christian Charismatic movement), the speaker will relax his muscles.¹² Also the person who speaks in the religious tongue is often healed from both physical and emotional ailments.¹³ Dr. Plogg, of the University of California at Los Angeles, after two years of research in the area of glossolalia, takes us a step further when he remarks that he has "yet to meet a schizophrenic tongue speaker in the new movement (Christian Charismatic Movement)."¹⁴ As can be seen, both the schizophrenic and Christian are able to practice glossolalia, yet careful distinctions must be made between the two.

B. Theories and Opinions on Glossolalia

Just as there are numerous types and examples of

¹²Ibid

¹³Ibid

¹⁴Ibid

glossolalia, there seem to be just as many varying theories and opinions on how people view this phenomenon of tongue speaking.¹⁵ Much of today's literature approaches glossolalia on a purely psychological level. Yet some treat this occurrence "as a true expression of a spiritual gift, closely akin to, if not identical with, the phenomenon as related in the New Testament book of Acts."¹⁶

Interestingly enough, the bulk of literature and study pertaining to tongue speaking has appeared within the past decade. This sudden flow of work is attributable to the national, if not world wide attention the Van Nuys incident threw upon this phenomenon. For, prior to the Van Nuys episode, Morton T. Kelsey reports that there were only four studies of glossolalia on file in medical literature, and only one of these dealt with religious tongues. From the psychological point of view, Kelsey reports that there were only three major published works. They were: Theodore Flournoy's work, published in 1900: a study compiled by the Society for Psychical Research, which

¹⁵ Although this author will report on those theories and opinions which view glossolalia purely from a psychological and theological level, this author does not believe that one can separate glossolalia, or any other experience, psychologically or theologically. Such a dualism does not exist. A psychological statement about an experience does not divorce it from theology; nor does a theological statement concerning an experience free it from psychological research. Such a dualism only serves to separate God from his creation.

¹⁶ Kildahl, p. 23.

was done at the request of William James and written under the pseudonym of Albert LeBarn; and Oskar Pfister's work, published in 1912.¹⁷ Because of the magnitude of research, it is no wonder that one runs into such a variety of explanations of this phenomenon.

For many years, philosophy theorized about the non-physical aspects of reality, "and had even called it the unconscious."¹⁸ But interest in this field had been mainly undisciplined. Then for the first time in centuries, the existence of an unconscious was turned into empirical fact with Freud's monumental book, The Interpretation of Dreams. Through this book, Freud was able to unlock the door that had kept "the realm of the unconscious, the non-physical, which religion calls the world of the spirit,"¹⁹ from being seriously studied. Though Freud never thoroughly investigated the religious implications of his findings, he had set the stage for Jung.

With the foundation laid by Freud, Jung developed his theory of the collective unconscious. He felt that the unconscious is in contact with a non-physical force that surrounds the human conscious, and if it is integrated into the total personality, mental and physical healing will take

¹⁷Kelsey, pp. 202-205.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 189.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 190-191.

place. Through the close friendship of a Swiss psychologist, Theodore Flournoy, Jung came to believe that glossolalia could be a positive instrument for the integration of the personality, thus producing healing. Because of this, Jung held religious tongue speaking to be a valid and important experience.²⁰

Because of the trail Freud and Jung blazed into the wilderness of the irrational, the many interested in the psychological explanations of religious tongue-speaking have had a road to venture upon. But because much of the travel into this wilderness is still relatively new, opinions and views vary with each author.

One author who has taken up the challenge of looking at glossolalia from a psychological point of view is Dr. L. N. Van Eetveldt Vivier, of South Africa. Dr. Vivier conducted a study with the purpose of trying to determine if glossolalists had a basic weakness in their personality, or if the experience was "due instead to the impact of religious dynamism."²¹ Vivier's findings reported that a cause other than a pathological one had to be found to explain the dissociation which occurs in the experience of glossolalia. Vivier feels that if tongue speaking is to be understood and defined, the collective unconscious as

²⁰Ibid., pp. 188-189

²¹Ibid., p. 204

depicted by Dr. Jung cannot be ignored. Vivier feels that by accepting Jung's view of the collective unconscious, this Pentecostal experience then becomes important evidence of the reality of a religious experience.²²

Another author concerned about the psychological explanation of tongue speaking is Morton T. Kelsey. In his book Tongue-Speaking, he summarizes four different common evaluations of this phenomenon: (1) It is seen as a psychological abnormality or demon possession; (2) the original experience of Pentecost has never been fully nor correctly interpreted, thus we do not truly understand what it is; (3) the occurrence of tongue speaking was helpful for the early church, but holds no validity for today's church; (4) it is a spiritual gift, received directly from the Holy Spirit that is as valid in today's time as it was in the Apostles' day.

Kelsey feels that if religion is to be considered a valuable and workable part of one's life, contact with the 'spirit' is inevitable. He believes that those who are striving for a closer union with God, will frequently be open to religious experiences. Kelsey believes that as a result of this openness to psychic reality, faith healing of both the mind and the body is possible.²³

²²Ibid., pp. 104-205.

²³Ibid., p. 205.

In his book, Kelsey reviews five ways in which glossolalia can be considered as a psychological phenomenon. He states that some hold tongue speaking as a schizophrenic manifestation. This is because the speaker displays a typical schizophrenic pattern allowing "himself to be possessed, or dispossessed, by the contents of his unconscious."²⁴ Kelsey disagrees with this observation, for he argues that the speaker suffers no damage to his ego and is able to maintain the balance between reality and fantasy, both before and after the experience.²⁵

Many psychologists and researchers in the field of glossolalia consider it to be a form of hysteria. Kelsey disagrees. He agrees that both arise from the unconscious, but holds that is all they have in common. He states that the difference lies in the fact that hysteria is a sickness that often puts the mind and even the body out of commission, whereas tongue speaking is a religious experience that gives one a greater ability to function in the world of both the material and spiritual.²⁶

Another explanation given for tongues in the psychological sphere is to consider it as a form of hypnosis. But Kelsey sees the only similarities between

²⁴Kildahl, p. 28.

²⁵Kelsey, pp. 206-209

²⁶Ibid., pp. 209-210

the two in that they both open the mind to the unconscious.
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The theory that glossolalia is a form of auto-suggestion is also dismissed by Kelsey. While he feels that it is possible to suggest certain ideas to one's unconscious, he sees it as being extremely doubtful that one can suggest what was never known to him before, or to "autosuggest one's self into a transforming religious experience."²⁸

The fifth theory that Kelsey deals with is an exalted memory based on repression. He denounces this theory on the basis that no mechanism is suggested by which this may be triggered. He also feels that the theory fails to state why repressed memories of foreign languages contain such vocabularies for the praise of God and Jesus Christ. He also denounces the theory for failing "to explain the numinous and healing qualities of the religious experience which occur along with these 'exalted memories.'" 29

Though Kelsey objects to the five theories mentioned above, he proposes two additional psychological explanations. Both of these are based on glossolalia's similarity to the psychic reality of dreams and visions

²⁷Ibid., p. 210.

²⁸Ibid., p. 211.

²⁹Ibid., p. 210.

For Kelsey, tongue-speaking is an important psychological and religious phenomenon, best understood in relation to the Jungian theory of the collective unconscious.³⁰

Another study that is concerned with the psychological significance of tongue speaking was done by Princeton Theological Seminary professors, James N. Lapsley and John H. Simpson. Their report appeared in two parts in *Pastoral Psychology*. These two authors treat this Pentecostal occurrence from the standpoint of it being psychomotor behavior with its resemblance to trance states, somnambulism, mediumship, and automatic writing, "for all, or nearly all the voluntary muscles are dissociated from the conscious control."³¹

They assert that the bulk of those active in the Neo-Pentecostal movement are individuals who have a need for personal security and emotional expression. Tongues, they feel, serve as an emotional outlet through which these troubled people can release their anxieties. Though they are somewhat uncertain about the positive and negative effects of glossolalia, they do agree that speaking in tongue does reduce some inner conflicts and helps the practitioners to cope more adequately with their world.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 211-219

³¹Kildahl, p. 30

But the gift also "leads some to over-emphasize their 'specialness,' isolating them along with their peer group from the mainstream of society."³²

Wayne E. Oates of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is also interested in the psychological aspects of glossolalia. His study appears in a tri-author book entitled Glossolalia. He feels that intellectualization, institutionalization and sophistication have all resulted in a deep repression of religious thought. It is only understandable then, that as these emotions finally start to surface, the first attempts at communicating them should sound like babble. Tongue-speaking expresses itself as a childlike, unguided and unpatterned type of speech, and yet it seems to be as meaningful to the speaker as the first utterances of a child are to him. Because of this, Oates feels, it would be appropriate to study glossolalia in the light of its correlation to "the development of language in the thought of a child."³³ His study denies that the present resurgence of glossolalia is due to the activity of the Holy Spirit, but rather it is the breakthrough of religious emotions that have been deeply felt, but have

³²Ibid., pp. 29-31.

³³Wayne E. Oates, Frank Stagg and Glenn Hinson, GLOSSOLALIA (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1967), p. 85

been repressed too long. Oates maintains that practitioners of this phenomenon tend to have weak egos, confused identities, high anxiety levels and generally unstable personalities.³⁴

Anthony A. Hoekema, professor of systematic theology at Calvin Theological Seminary, in his book What About Tongue-Speaking, deals with glossolalia in neither a purely psychological level or spiritual level. Hoekema does not believe that glossolalia is inspired, but feels there is much value in the experience itself, for he "concedes that it has struck deep spiritual response in many persons."³⁵ Hoekema feels there are three possible explanations for the phenomenon: it is (1) a gift bestowed by the Holy Spirit; (2) a trap laid by the devil or; (3) an abnormal psychological condition. Since he does not consider glossolalia to be divinely inspired, he is inclined to view it as a psychological phenomenon. Hoekema admits having difficulty in dealing with glossolalia because of the many persons, especially Neo-Pentecostals, who have claimed to have had "true spiritual rebirth" as a result of tongue speaking. But he concludes that because of the person's desire to be close to God, and consequent long hours spent in earnest meditation and prayer, one "cannot

³⁴Ibid., pp. 76-99

³⁵Kildahl, p. 26.

help but produce a more fervent and perfect spiritual harmony."³⁶

So far we have been dealing only with those explanations of glossolalia that view it as mainly a psychological phenomenon. But it is important to realize that there are those who view tongue speaking as a true spiritual gift, received directly from the Holy Spirit.

Larry Christenson, pastor of the Trinity Lutheran Church in San Pedro, California, and a leading figure in Neo-Pentecostal movement, states in his book, Speaking in Tongues, that glossolalia is to be understood totally as a spiritual experience. He believes the phenomenon "involves a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit which is clearly spoken of in the Bible."³⁷ Christenson is leery and often critical of those who label glossolalists as being faddists or emotionalists. He supports his hypotheses by showing that "traditional church people now numbering in the thousands and perhaps millions ... have experienced this New Testament phenomenon (glossolalia)."³⁸ Christenson also points out the fact that those who have had this Pentecostal experience have witnessed a rebirth of faith in God, enthusiasm for the church, and spiritual as

³⁶Ibid., p. 27

³⁷Larry Christenson, SPEAKING IN TONGUES (Minneapolis: Dimension Books, 1968), p. 18

³⁸Ibid., p. 15.

well as emotional healing. For Christenson, these results cannot be taken lightly, but help prove the validity of the experience.³⁹

Larry Christenson interprets the Biblical occurrence of tongue-speaking on Pentecost as neither teaching nor instruction. He also feels this is true of present-day manifestations. Rather he feels that tongue speaking is an act of worship and adoration."⁴⁰

Christenson asserts that glossolalia cannot be cast aside as being purely gibberish. He interprets glossolalia as falling under Webster's definition of "language," which is defined as "any means, vocal or other, of expressing or communicating feeling or thought."⁴¹ He also uses professor Eugene Rapp, world famous linguist at the University of Mainz, Germany, to back him up, who, after having once heard someone speak in tongues, felt that it was not nonsense or gibberish.⁴²

Christenson also disagrees that glossolalia is emotional or ecstatic speech. Though the hearer may be considered to be ecstatic or amazed, as described in Acts 2:7 and 10:45, he feels the terms existanto and existeran

³⁹Ibid., pp. 13-14, 16-18.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 21.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 25.

⁴²Ibid., p. 24.

are nowhere meant to be applied to the speaker of the tongues.⁴³

John Sherrill is another author who views glossolalia as being a totally spiritual experience. Sherill's book, They Speak With Other Tongues, did much to fan the flames of Neo-Pentecostalism in the early 1960's, and is still doing so. This book is a highly colorful account of his own personal experience with glossolalia. He emphasized the fact that this phenomenon is steeped in firm historical background.⁴⁴ He feels that today's manifestations of the Holy Spirit are again playing the important role they had in the first century church.⁴⁵

Sherrill, like Christenson, interprets glossolalia to be a language, and not just gibberish. He maintains that those who speak in tongues often speak a language foreign to them, which someone else in the group understands. Sherrill is careful to dismiss instances in which the speaker was heard to have spoken only "snatches of," or "phrases from" or "words that sound like" a foreign language. After doing this, he still presents a large number of documented cases, in which a foreign language, not known to

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 74-76.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 33-43.

the speaker, was spoken in a long, connected discourse.⁴⁶
 To support his hypotheses that glossolalia is a language, he met with six linguists. Three were on the staff at Columbia University, two were professors at Union Theological Seminary, and one a professor at General Theological Seminary. Of the six, two were specialists in modern languages, three in ancient languages and one an expert in the study of language structure. He played over an hour's worth of tape of people speaking in tongues to these specialists, who, though they could not identify any particular language, unanimously agreed that all the samples had characteristics of a language. Then unaware to the linguists, Sherrill played someone trying to imitate glossolalia. The linguists, Sherrill reports, were quick to spot the deception. "That's not language," one man said, "that's just noise."⁴⁷

Though Sherrill does not approach glossolalia from a psychological perspective, his rhetoric and experiences closely parallel the psychological explanation made by other writers. "They are particularly similar to the Jungian theory of an experienced psychic which somehow fused together the antagonistic elements of the individual personality ... These warring opposites within the total

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 89-100

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 100.

personality ... came to reconciliation and peace."⁴⁸

Sherrill is also interested in what he calls the "group mind." He feels that "intimate, sustaining group fellowship" is a distinctive feature of glossolalia.⁴⁹

Though these authors offer numerous opinions and views of glossolalia, most writers in this field would agree, as did a meeting of psychiatrists in New York City in 1962, that tongue speaking is a genuine manifestation of the collective psyche, and can represent a healthy religious experience.⁵⁰ The oddest thing about the present day discussions concerning glossolalia is that psychologists consider tongue speaking to be a healthy religious experience, whereas "it is theologians, not psychologists, who find that glossolalia needs to be discussed psychologically."⁵¹

C. Empirical Research

With all the various explanations of glossolalia, it is not hard, after a little shopping around, to find an opinion that is custom made to your order. Because research in this field is relatively new, most studies

⁴⁸Kildahl, p. 34.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Kelsey; p. 200.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 206

have really only attempted to categorize glossolalia. To understand how glossolalia affects people, the personality types and psychological factors involved, and the effect it has upon group behavior, let us turn to two recent studies. The first was done jointly by Paul A. Qualben, M.D. psychiatrist; Lowell J. Satre, Ph.D., a professor of New Testament; and John P. Kildahl, a clinical psychologist. It was requested by the American Lutheran Church and later by the Behavioral Sciences Research Branch of the National Institute of Mental Health. The second report we will look into was entitled "A report of the Special Committee on the Work of the Holy Spirit," compiled by the United Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A.

Although the first study was done by the three individuals mentioned above, John Kildahl is the only one who compiled the results of this ten year study. These can be found in his book The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues. It should also be mentioned that some of his conclusions are not necessarily shared by the other two researchers.

Kildahl reports that when these gentlemen started to penetrate the psychology of speaking in tongue, five hypotheses emerged as worthy of investigation: (1) Believing that glossolalia was similar to hypnosis, they wanted to determine whether tongue speakers were more submissive, suggestible and dependent than non-tongue speakers. (2)

They attempted to see if glossolalists initiated their speech while emotionally close to a strong and masterful leader. (3) They wanted to investigate glossolalia as an example of "regression in the service of the ego," for research showed that tongue-speaking provides a release from tension and conflict, and allows the person to feel less depressed. (4) They assumed that the emotional benefits of tongue-speaking did not last over an extended period. They felt that once the novelty of the experience disappeared, glossolalia would become a routine thing, allowing the speaker to settle back into his former emotional condition. (5) They wanted to learn how linguists appraised the "language" spoken by glossolalists.

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In order to test their first hypothesis, the researchers used the Apperceptive Test. This test involves twenty separate pictures, in which the person being tested has to supply the story that best fits the pictures. They found that glossolalists told stories in which someone other than the main character provided the solution to the problem. Because of this, Kildahl comes to the conclusion that tongue speakers "are more submissive, suggestible and dependent in the presence of authority figures than non-tongue speakers."

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⁵²Kildahl, pp. 38-39.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 41-43

Through the means of interviews, these researchers came to the conclusion that tongue speakers initiate their speech in the presence of a strong, benevolent authority, though they had a hard time telling whether this person or Jesus was their leader.⁵⁴

To test the third and fourth hypotheses, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory was used. The testing showed glossolalists felt better after speaking in tongues, than did non-speakers. When tested a year later, the glossolalists continued to report that they felt the same feeling of well being, even after a long period of elapsed time.⁵⁵

Kildahl reports that for the fifth hypothesis, linguists agreed that glossolalia fails to meet the criteria that Charles F. Hockett gives for his definition of language.⁵⁶

A major concern of these three researchers was to classify the essential differences between glossolalists and non-glossolalists. In this area, according to Kildahl, came the most significant finding of their research. They found that no one group of glossolalists or non-glossolalists was any more mentally healthy than the other. The

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 44-45.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 45-47.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 47

criteria they used for being mentally healthy were the ability to give and receive love, to be responsible for behavior towards others and one-self, and to be able to do productive work.⁵⁷

The next major finding showed that tongue speakers were not of a special personality type. Tongue speakers represented a cross section of all usual personality types. They also found that glossolalists cut across all ranges of socio-economic, intelligence and educational levels.⁵⁸

Although there were no significant differences between the two groups, there were subtle personality variables involved. It was only through the use of sophisticated psychological and psychiatric methods that these variables could be isolated.⁵⁹

The most important difference between glossolalists and non-glossolalists is that tongue speakers develop a deep trusting and submissive relationship to the authority figure who brought them into the practice of glossolalia. Without this "dependency transfer" to the leader, Kildahl states that speaking in tongues cannot be initiated.

Tongue speakers also have a strong need for external guidance from some trusted authority. This sense of being

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 48.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 49.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 50.

able to lean on someone more powerful than themselves, gives them security and direction in their lives, and often brings about great peace and relaxation. Kildahl feels that it is this submissive attitude shown towards the leader that allows a speaker to have the great feeling of euphoria, not the actual speaking in tongues.⁶⁰

They also found that this deep subordination to an authority figure involves ego-regression. The ego is partially abandoned, for it ceases its conscious control of speech. This type of subordination also involves emotional regression, for "without it there cannot be the unconscious, automatic and fluent selection of audible syllables which constitutes glossolalia."⁶¹

As these researchers looked into the psychological factors involved in glossolalia, they found that most tongue speakers have experienced an anxiety-crisis preceeding their speaking in tongues. Dr. Paul Qualben, after interviewing two groups, one of glossolalists and a controlled group of non-glossolalists, learned that 85% of the tongue-speakers had experienced an anxiety crisis opposed to only 30% in the non-tongue speaking group. Kildahl believes that this internal factor creates the necessary atmosphere needed in which to motivate one to seek an answer through glossolalia. He also sees anxiety-

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 51.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 53.

free individuals as being less apt to seek this kind of experience, and as having more difficulty in finding it necessary or understandable.⁶²

Kildahl and his associates also found psychological regression as another emotional factor involved in the development of the glossolalia experience. The term 'regression' "refers to a reversion to an earlier level of maturity, during which the rational, common-sense ego controlled way of relating to life is somehow dismissed."⁶³ It is generally under the mass pressure of a group or crowd, or the contagious climate of a leader's charisma that this regressive nature appears, and one's critical faculties are subdued. Because of this, Kildahl states that glossolalia is rarely generated in the course of quiet, rational introspection.⁶⁴

When these researchers looked at the effects glossolalia had on group behavior, they found that tongue speakers tended to band together in highly visible groups. Kildahl states that this sense of group camaraderie comes as a result of the criticism and disturbances glossolalists find that by banding together they can keep their identity and practices alive. As a result of this protective fellow-

⁶²Ibid., pp. 57-59

⁶³Ibid., p. 59

⁶⁴Ibid.

ship, individual members find their attitudes toward this Pentecostal phenomenon being positively reinforced. Because of this group affirmation, tongue speakers become quite verbal about their experience in the presence of others, often making non-glossolalists feel inferior. This group camaraderie also provides tongue-speakers with an atmosphere which allows them to exercise their 'gifts,' which has a tendency to lead toward histrionic display.⁶⁵

The second study we shall investigate was a report prepared by a special committee for the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. Although this committee did relatively little empirical research on its own, it did study and review much of the relevant psychological data available.

It is interesting that the conclusions reached by this committee are somewhat different than those reached by John Kildahl. Dr. Kildahl concludes that tongue speakers are more susceptible and dependent upon a strong authority figure. The committee chosen by the United Presbyterian Church did not find this to be the case.

The committee reported that their evidence and study does not show tongue speakers to be anymore susceptible or dependent upon a strong authority figure than non-tongue speakers. They report that a study done by Gerlack and Hine

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 66-74

showed that twenty-three percent of those they studied who had spoken in glossolalia, spoke in tongues for the first time when they were alone.⁶⁶ The committee also reports that many others had reported to have spoken in tongue "after considerable amounts of prayer and searching, unrelated to any religious meetings or involvement of other individuals."⁶⁷ Others reported that several months elapsed before coming into contact with those active in the movement. The committee also reports that L. N. Van Eetwelt Vivier, a South African psychiatrist, found that "his test group scored lower than the control group on suggestibility and challenged the popular notion that tongue speakers are highly susceptible to suggestion."⁶⁸

This special committee also reported that glossolalia does not relate to mental illness. "Speaking in tongues was not considered an indicator of neurosis or psychosis."⁶⁹

It was also reported that Dr. Stanley Plog, using the California Psychological Inventory, found that "those who entered into the tongues experience were very

⁶⁶ THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Philadelphia: United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1970), p. 49.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 49.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 50.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 49.

responsible and normally well-controlled individuals."⁷⁰

Gerlack and Hine also came to the same conclusions.

Through interviews they found tongue-speakers "are generally normally adjusted and productive members of society, and indicated that the notion that such persons were mal-adjusted, emotionally unstable, or emotionally deprived is contradicted by their field data."⁷¹

This committee also found a report from the Diocese of California Episcopal Church, dated May 2, 1963, which reported that psychiatrists on a committee investigating tongue-speaking "reacted in affirmation to the concept that speaking in tongues provided a new language which helped to overcome inadequacy."⁷² The report also stated:

Without judging whether glossolalia be of God or not, our psychiatrists sense that it could be for some, a healthy outlet freeing and enlarging religious life. Again, the scientists' research cannot determine whether it is the Holy Spirit that provides the language of the glossolalists or not, but it can affirm that the need for expression beyond normal verbalization is a wholesome part of a normal person's life. To satisfy it is to enrich life,⁷³ so long as the means itself is not self destructive.

D. The Fruits of Glossolalia

Up to this point we have looked at the various explanations people offer for glossolalia and have grasped

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 50

⁷²Ibid., p. 53.

⁷³Ibid.

some of the psychological factors involved, but the most important question has not yet been raised; how is glossolalia to be evaluated. For many, all the studies and explanations are only attempts to classify this Pentecostal phenomenon into a category that can be labeled as either, "safe is used as directed," or "dangerous stay clear." But how does one classify tongue speaking? Dr. William Sargent, the distinguished British psychiatrist, suggests that such strange religious practices can only be evaluated on the basis of their fruit.⁷⁴ William James also considered this to be a valid acid test for any religious experience. But like all experiences, glossolalia has both negative and positive aspects.

Many of the negative aspects that arise from the use of glossolalia are due to the over importance practitioners give to the experience itself. Many glossolalists allow themselves to become inflated by their experiences, causing those who have no connection with the phenomenon to become alienated and thus hostile. This overemphasizing of the gift can allow one to feel as if he/she is "God's gift" to the world, causing him/her to isolate himself from society. This may also happen in groups, causing them to feel superior and allowing themselves to be separated from the rest of humanity. Usually

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Kelsey, p. 218.

these people will become "gift seekers," who want only the gifts. Such attitudes not only isolate them from society, but cause strife and dissension to rise up within their individual groups.⁷⁵

Though the practice of glossolalia can give rise to dissension, the phenomenon cannot be easily dismissed, for it also has many positive aspects.

E. Mansell Pattison, M.D., states that tongue speaking "may play an important role in the change of direction in people's lives."⁷⁶ Kelsey, in his book Tongue-Speaking, presents many cases where tongue-speaking had a life transforming effect on people's lives, who, before their experience, had severe emotional problems.⁷⁷

If tongue-speaking can have such healing effects, then how can one say it is not the work of the Holy Spirit? Only an individual who distinguishes between natural and supernatural healing and growth could doubt that the Holy Spirit is present in this healing. But this author does not accept this dichotomy. Thus we must conclude that glossolalia, when it brings about healing and growth, must be from the Holy Spirit.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 222-227.

⁷⁶Bach, Marcus, THE INNER ECSTASY (Cleveland: World, 1969), p. 145.

⁷⁷Kelsey, pp. 167-168.

CHAPTER IV

A THEOLOGY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In some respects the Neo-Pentecostal movement, with its stress on the experience of the Holy Spirit has offered a fresh new perspective to the Church. Its vitality and enthusiasm are welcome elements to Christendom. But not all aspects of the charismatic renewal are healthy. Besides bringing noticeable life into the Church, it has also brought plenty of misery and destruction. As we saw in Chapter one, much of this conflict originates from misunderstandings and generalizations which are not true. But, as it was also pointed out, conflict also arises, not because the charismatic experience is divisive in itself, but because it is not properly interpreted. Because of this poor theology and improper interpretation of the charismatic experience, doctrines are taught and practices endorsed which are not Christian and which can become divisive.

In Chapters II and III the attempt was made to clear-up many of the misconceptions pertaining to the charismatic renewal. In this chapter we will study the proper setting in which to interpret the charismatic experience. To do this, we will investigate the Apostle Paul's theology on the Holy Spirit. It is hoped that such a study will clear-up many questionable concepts held within the Neo-Pentecostal movement, allowing people in this

movement to accept and understand their experience in the proper light of Christian teaching (at least Christian as seen by the Apostle Paul).

A. Paul's View of the Spirit:

The Christological Qualification

In many ways Paul is the man of the hour when it comes to clearing up the several problems raised by the present Neo-Pentecostal movement. Two elements which make Paul so valuable in solving the problems churches face today because of the Charismatic movement are (1) he faced a similar situation in Corinth when the "enthusiasts" of that church were causing such a stir; and (2) Paul gives his concept of the Spirit ethical depth.

Paul, along with Luke and other early church leaders, saw the Church, as it was in the world, as the sole field of the Spirit's operation. But for Paul, the ecclesiastical structure was not as dominant as it was for Luke. Rather, Paul saw the "Christological qualification of the Spirit" as the all important factor. This made Paul's view of the Spirit more open to the threat of enthusiasm or charismaticism, (as it was in Corinth) whereas Luke's model kept the Spirit more under the control of church leadership; for it tended to tie together the

close relationship of both Spirit and office.¹

Although Paul's "Christological qualification" of the Spirit made him more susceptible to charismaticisms, Paul in no way equated Spirit to some mysterious power, working in some namby-pamby way. Rather than perceiving the Spirit as a magical force, always doing the mysterious, Paul viewed the Spirit in a double way: as a force which bestows upon the believer God's miraculous gift of grace and as a power which gives the person the ability to live the faith daily.² Or to use Paul's own words, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." (Gal. 5:25)

To appreciate more fully Paul's Christological understanding of the Holy Spirit, let us look closely at five texts: 2 Corinthians 3:17, 1 Corinthians 12:3, Romans 8:9b, Galatians 4:6 and Philippians 1:19.

2 Corinthians 3:17 is part of a larger section that begins with verse 6. In this section Paul writes that his message of the risen Lord concerns a new covenant. In contrast to the old covenant or written code of Moses. Paul compares the superiority of the new covenant over the old by stating that the splendor of the old has faded away

¹Ernst Käsemann, PERSPECTIVES ON PAUL (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), pp. 123-124.

²Rudolf Bultmann, THEOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), I, 336.

(καταργουμένην), while the dispensation of the Spirit will be attended with greater glory.³

The old covenant, which kills the Spirit, was transmitted through the law, and embodied or personified in Moses. Since Moses was the transmitter of the old, in the same way the Spirit is the personification of the new. "Thus it is appropriate to describe the new as a dispensation of the Spirit."⁴ So in comparing the old and new, Paul could use the terms Law and Spirit.⁵

Besides the Spirit being the giver of life, (since the law brings death) the Spirit is also the source of freedom. In this context Paul means freedom from the bondage of the Law. But Bultmann is quick to point out that this freedom is not "a freedom as a base of operations to the flesh." Rather it brings about a new servitude to the will of God: to be a slave to Christ. In this sense we can see that Paul does not equate Spirit to the magical or mysterious, but sees it as the opposite of the flesh. Thus the Spirit is the means of removing the veil of Moses (v.13,16), which has been placed over the minds of Israel,

³Henry B. Swete, THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (London: Macmillian, 1909), pp. 4-5

⁴Neill Q. Hamilton, THE HOLY SPIRIT AND ESCHATOLOGY IN PAUL (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1957), pp. 4-5

⁵Ibid.

and the giver of life and freedom from the law.⁶

The only way in which this freedom and life can be actualized is by recognizing the works of Christ as acted out upon the cross: by turning from the law to God through Christ. Hence, the Lord is the sole source for these benefits of freedom from the old code or Law. Because the Lord Jesus is the source from which the glory comes, we can then understand why Paul explains the Spirit as the Spirit of the Lord (v.17), for the Spirit can only give what it receives from Christ.⁷

So by looking at verse 17, and the verses before it, we can see that the Spirit functions in a similar fashion as does the Law. As the Law is the communicator of the old covenant, the Spirit is the communicator of the new covenant. In the transmitting of this new covenant, which offers freedom from the law and freedom to be genuinely human in Christ, the exalted Lord serves a double role: he is the basis for this new covenant, because of his redemptive action upon the cross, and he is the source of its benefits. What verse 17 does then "is to equate the source of the benefits with the agent of their distribution." The Spirit is Lord, and because he communicates to the world the new covenant of the Christ so well, we

⁶Bultmann, I, 331.

⁷Hamilton, pp. 5-6.

lose sight of the Spirit and become conscious only of the risen Lord.⁸

For as the Spirit's basic manifestation is the utterance "Lord Jesus," so now we are told that what the Spirit does is exactly what the Lord does: the Spirit's work is not an additional or special work beyond the Lord's; the Spirit is the Lord at work.

1 Corinthians 12:3 is another verse which helps us to see that Christological way in which Paul conceived the function of the Spirit. Verse 3 is a preliminary statement before Paul deals with the nature of the gifts as they had been used in Corinth. Apparently, some of the Corinthians had felt that life in the Spirit, or proof of the Spirit, was manifested through powerful acts, such as tongue-speaking, healing and prophecy. But Paul saw this differently. It was not the mission of the Spirit to draw attention to itself, but rather to the risen Lord. Before the Corinthians had become Christian, the spirit that held them in bondage pointed not to God, but to itself. Because of this, Paul saw the only way in which to discern spirits was to see if it drew attention to itself or to Christ. And because the present Lordship of Christ was the center of the life of the Church, the Spirit of the exalted Lord could not point to itself. Therefore, we see again that for Paul, the Spirit could only be identified in Christ.

⁸Ibid., p. 6.

⁹Bruner, p. 289.

The Spirit and risen Lord were to be seen as one.¹⁰

Romans 8:9-10 again helps us to relate Paul's concept of the Spirit in a Christological setting. In verse 9, Paul speaks of the Spirit as dwelling (οἰκεῖ) in the believer; then in verse 10 he turns right around and speaks of Christ as being in the believer (Χριστός ἐν ὑμῖν). Such an easy transition reveals that in the mind of Paul they mean the same thing. This shows a close connection to 2 Corinthians 3:17, "The Lord is the Spirit." So we can safely say for Paul that the terms "Christ" and "Spirit of Christ" are reciprocal.¹¹

But it is important not to identify being in Christ ontologically. Rather it is a dynamic identification; so that it is through the work of the Holy Spirit that is not based upon our efforts, for that would be a return to the power of Law; but the basis for our life in Christ is the righteousness and messianic work of Christ, as communicated through the Spirit. Furthermore, since the "benefits (life in Christ) are inseparable from the living Lord, the Lord Himself is present."¹² This makes it easy for Paul to say that "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does

¹⁰Arno Clemens Gaebele, THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT (New York: "Our Hope," n.d.), pp. 58-59.

¹¹Hamilton, p. 10.

¹²Ibid.,

not belong to him." (v.9b) Again we see that the Spirit can have no meaning outside of a Christological setting.

Galatians 4:6 is a repetition of Christ's link with the believer which is established through the Holy Spirit, again giving the Spirit a Christological qualification. Whereas it is the Son's mission to bring us into the right relationship with God, it is the Spirit's goal to communicate and to make believers conscious of their filial relationship with God the Father. Again we have a glimpse of how Paul understood the function of the Spirit in such a Christocentric manner.¹³

Philippians 1:19, the last of the five selected texts, is a very appropriate one to end with. Paul is faced with possible martyrdom as he writes this letter, and his statement in verse 19 reflects to the student of Paul a deep appreciation for the working of Christ's Spirit within his life. It was the Holy Spirit which first conveyed the grace of Christ to him on the road to Damascus: it was the Holy spirit which assured him of his sonship in the future; It was the power of the Holy Spirit which gave him the strength to rise above the flesh; and now in his time of need he again looks to the Spirit for aid. Thus we can conclude from this verse that the Holy Spirit is not only connected to Christ in that the Spirit initially gives

¹³Swete, pp. 204-206

the believer grace and power to rise above the flesh, and confirms his sonship in the now and in the future, but that the Spirit is also the agent of Christ which makes day by day living possible. The Holy Spirit is seen Christologically by Paul, because the Spirit is the one who communicates the benefits of Christ to the believer; and does it so effectively that the benefits become inseparable from the Risen Lord.¹⁴

In light of the passages just examined, Neill Q. Hamilton raises the question: is the relationship then between the Spirit and Risen Lord only functional, or is there a further cause for their union? Hamilton goes on to answer his own question with an affirmative, stating that it was through the medium of the spirit that Jesus was made the Son of God, and that it is the Spirit which sustains that Sonship.¹⁵ Hamilton gives further explanation when he points out that Paul distinguishes between two modes of Christ's existence: the first state of Christ's being is his nature before He was exalted to the status of Lord, the second is the glory Christ takes on as the risen Lord, His sonship to God. While the first form of Christ's being was clothed by the flesh, His second mode of existence is in the form of the spirit. Romans 1:4

¹⁴Gaebelein, p. 81.

¹⁵Hamilton, pp. 12-15.

(κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης), confirms this. Paul in 2 Corinthians 13:4 states that Christ was not only exalted Lord through the power of God, (that being His Spirit), but that it is this same power which sustains the glory of the Lord down through the ages. But the Spirit not only served to raise Christ to Sonship with God, he also serves, through Christ's redemptive act, to raise us also to sonship with God (1 Corinthians 6:14 and Romans 8:11).¹⁶

By looking at these passages from Paul, it is clear that the role of the Spirit is not merely functional, for it takes on a dynamic role as it serves as the vehicle for our Lord's glory and power, but for all believers, because "The grace or the gospel in this fact is that Christ's life of resurrection and exaltation is a communicable one. It is a life that can make others alive. It is a life-giving Spirit (πνεῦμα ζωοποιου)."¹⁷

If we take Paul's view of the Spirit seriously, especially the part where Hamilton points out that the Spirit serves not only a functional but also a dynamic role, we not only conclude that Paul's concept of the Spirit was based on a Christological qualification, but that it also takes on an eschatological perspective.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 15.

B. Paul's View of the Spirit: An Eschatological Entity.

To understand the future meaning of the Spirit, as given it by Paul, all we must do is look at the idea of the general resurrection, the words ἀπαρχή and ἀρραβών , and the concept of Kingdom of God with particular reference being given to Romans 14:17.

In the last section we discussed how it was through the Spirit of God that Christ was glorified as the exalted Lord (Romans 1:4) and that it is this same Spirit which shall raise believers to glory in the general resurrection (Romans 8:11). By thus linking the Spirit of Christ's resurrection to the general resurrection, Paul gives the Spirit meaning which lies primarily in the future. This idea is reinforced further in 1 Corinthians 15:20.23. In these verses Paul uses the term ἀπαρχή. This term ἀπαρχή in W. Bauer's Greek-English Lexicon stands for the "first fruits ... which were holy to the divinity and were consecrated before the rest could be put to use..." Hamilton refers to Kittel's meaning of ἀπαρχή (first fruits) as denoting the earliest crop of the year. Thus it is not difficult for us to realize Paul's usage of the word ἀπαρχή , as used in 2 Corinthians 15:20.23, refers to Christ's resurrection as the first fruit of the general resurrection, because it was the power which served to raise Christ to glory, who is the first fruit of the

resurrection of the dead. So to Paul, the Spirit has meaning as seen in the future, because it is in the future that the general resurrection will take place. This ties

...the resurrection and resurrection life of Christ into a common process with the future resurrection of believers. The obvious conclusion is that the Spirit which lay behind the resurrection and exaltation of the Lord¹⁸ will also constitute the future life of believers.

As Romans 8:11, along with Romans 1:4, carries forward the idea that the Spirit is to be seen primarily in light of the future, when it acts as the agent in which we are resurrected up into glory with Christ; Romans 8:19-22 relates the renewal of the material world to the future, through the power of the Spirit of Christ. Thus it is through the Spirit that both humankind and the whole of creation will be redeemed. But because this action lies in the future, the sons of God and his creation groan in the present. Yet there is groaning only because the Spirit has given the believer a fore-taste of what is to be ... making the resurrection a present, yet future reality. And this fore-taste is but the ἀπαρχή of the future harvest: the risen Lord.¹⁹

Paul again relates the Spirit to the future with the use of the word ἀπαβών in 2 Corinthians 1:22 and 5:5. W. Bauer says that the term ἀπαβών means "first install-

¹⁸Ibid., p. 18 (with reference to pp. 17-19).

¹⁹Ibid., p. 20; Bultmann, I, 335.

ment, deposit, down payment, pledge, that pays a part of the purchase price in advance, and so secures a contract valid."²⁰ Bultmann states that Paul uses this term to signify that the Spirit is an eschatological gift, serving as a seal or guarantee for the believer's salvation.²¹ And C. K. Barret, in his book, The Holy Spirit and Gospel Tradition, writes,

For Paul also, the gift of the Spirit meant both the realization of eschatology and a reaffirmation of it; so much is implied by his use of the term ἀρραβών ; the present possession of the Spirit means that part of the future bliss is already attained, and²²equally that part remains future, still unpossessed.

The connection of the Spirit and eschatology can once again be seen in Romans 14:17 when Paul equates the Kingdom of God to the Holy Spirit, provided one associates 'Kingdom of God' with the future blessings of redemption. Hamilton argues that the 'Kingdom of God' is still outstanding, and affiliates Christ's kingdom as a present kingdom ... which will be replaced "at the end" by the Kingdom of God, or the Father's kingdom. Furthermore, Hamilton sees Paul's usage of the term 'Kingdom of God' as referring to a future kingdom because he states that out of the ten times it appears in Paul's writings, it

²⁰Walter Bauer, A GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 109.

²¹Bultmann, I, 335.

²²C. K. Barrett, THE HOLY SPIRIT AND GOSPEL TRADITION (New York: Macmillan, 1947), p. 153.

appears five times with the word inheritance in the future sense (κληρονομία, κληρονομεῖν).²³ But we can obtain further proof that the term Spirit in the passage (v.17), as it relates to the 'Kingdom of God,' represents the Spirit in an eschatological sense by the words 'peace' and 'joy'. According to Bultmann, these two words belong to the future. The word 'peace', as it is used, "means 'salvation' in the eschatological sense." (Romans 2:10 and 8:6 use the word peace in this way, denoting life with God). The term 'joy' is also to be understood as an eschatological phenomenon, in that "the believer's existence, being eschatological, is an existence in joy." Hence, whether we accept only Hamilton's argument or Bultmann's, or both, we can conclude that Romans 14:17 gives the word Spirit meaning as it is seen in its relation to the future.²⁴

In concluding this section, we see how Paul considered the Spirit to belong primarily to the future. But this is not to say that Paul's eschatology was only a future oriented one. No, as in the Synoptic Gospels, the future is also in the present, the now. Paul understands this nowness of the eschaton through his doctrine of the Spirit, "Just as in the Synoptics the future kingdom breaks

²³Hamilton, pp. 21-22.

²⁴Bultmann, I, 339.

into the present in the action of Jesus, so in Paul the future age has broken into the present in the action of the Spirit."²⁵

C. Paul's View of the Spirit: Eschatology and the Present

In this section, we shall see how Paul's Christological and eschatological understanding of the Spirit leads to a view of the Christian life which is in the present, and how it is the Spirit which bridges this dualism of the future and now in the believer's life. Plus, it is the stress on the nowness of the eschaton, which, for Paul, gives rise to the obligation that the Christian live his/her life; to borrow Bultmann's phrase, "in active holiness," or ethically.

We can best comprehend the tension between the future and the present in Paul's theory of the Spirit by examining his notion on how the Spirit operates in the subjects of sonship, glorification and faith.

Paul understands the sonship of the believer to be based upon the "Christ act," and at the same time associates sonship with the work of the Spirit. Galatians 3:14 and 3:26 verifies the fact that sonship is founded upon Christ. Then Romans 1:4 and Galatians 4:6,7 conveys the fact that the believer becomes aware of his/her sonship by means

²⁵Hamilton, p. 23.

of the Spirit. The Spirit is the believer's distinguishing mark of sonship. In Galatians 4:6,7 (also Romans 8:15-16), Paul shows us that this is done by the Spirit bearing witness in the believer by crying "Abba! Father!"²⁶

By the Spirit crying "Abba! Father!", believers in Christ are assured of their future sonship with God. In this respect the Spirit becomes the mark of the disciple's inheritance of God. (Romans 8:17) And Paul tells us in Romans 8:17 that all believers shall receive what Christ received, "Because heirs of God are fellow heirs of Christ ... they will receive what He received ... they will be glorified with Him, and will have the future glory revealed in them as it has already been revealed in Christ."²⁷ Since the future aspect of the believer's sonship still remains to be fulfilled, the present revelations of Christ's glory are merely the first-fruits of what is to come. Hence, the sonship of the believer is in the present as it

²⁶ Although I believe that the cry "Abba! Father!" is the Spirit bearing witness in the believer that he/she is a child of God, I disagree with Hermann Gunkel that this phenomenon belongs to the category of glossolalia. Rather, I believe it to be 'a knowing' that a believer has about his/her filial relationship to the Father, which comes from deep within.

Alexander B. Bruce, ST. PAUL'S CONCEPTION OF CHRISTIANITY (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894), pp. 249-150.

²⁷ Hamilton, p. 32.

is made known through the witness of the Spirit, and the fulness of the disciple's sonship lies in the future when Christ shall be fully glorified and His enemies are put under his feet.²⁸

With the Spirit making each disciple aware of his/her sonship in the "present" by dwelling within them, there then arises an ethical obligation for those who are filled with the Spirit or who are children of God. Because as children of God, each believer becomes God's temple, for the Spirit of God dwells in them (τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν οἴκεῖ ... 1 Corinthians 3:16). And since God is Holy, He requires those whom He has consecrated as His shrines to be Holy.²⁹

... the Spirit which dwells in the Church individual believer is essentially holy, and the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit must be holy not only by a sacramental consecration but through the maintenance of the strictest ethical purity.³⁰

The tension between the future and present work of the Spirit can once again be recognized in the motif of glorification. According to W. Bauer, the word glory initially carried with it an eschatological meaning, denoting the splendor or radiance which belongs to heaven, in which the disciple of Christ will share in the next life.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Bruce, pp. 252-253.

³⁰Swete, p. 181.

Paul points to this future glorification when in Romans 5:2 he writes, "... and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God." Yet for Paul, this glory, which was to be appropriated in the future is already breaking in on the believer through the office of the Spirit; for it was God's glory which gives the Christian the daily strength and power needed to be changed into the likeness of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). So, whereas this glorification is to be completed in the future, the believer participates in it in the present. The present glory in which the Christian shares, by way of the Spirit, is but the first-fruits of the harvest to come.³¹

Like the subject of sonship, the realization that the believer participates in the final glorification in the present brings with it ethical ramifications. There can be little doubt that Paul stressed the nowness of the future for this very purpose; to keep members of the Church from becoming so heavenly minded that they are of no earthly good. This threat can be seen in 2 Thessalonians. Under the sway of false teachers, the members of the Thessalonica Church had been convinced that the "Day of the Lord" had already come. Such teaching led to misconduct and licentiousness which Paul ordered to be stopped through

³¹Hamilton, p. 37.

the means of church discipline.³² Thus, there can be little doubt that Paul stressed the nowness of the Spirit in his future letters so as to stop such fanaticism. This whole concept of stressing the 'present' for ethical reasons, will further be seen in the ethical side of Paul's impression on faith.

Faith is another subject which helps to illustrate how Paul views the Spirit not only belonging to the future, but also being active in the present. The fact that the Christian's faith is projected into the future is evident in 2 Corinthians 5:7. Whereas the present is visible, the future is invisible, and the disciple of the risen Lord is not to walk by sight, but by what is invisible, and to walk by what is invisible takes faith. Accordingly, Paul sees it to be within the office of the Spirit to help the Christians walk by faith (Galatians 5:5): a faith which points to the future, to the general resurrection, which gives ultimate meaning and purpose to the Christian's life. Thus the future orientation of the Spirit, as it has to do with faith, is that it makes the disciple aware of his/her future life in glory, which is easy for the Spirit to do; since it was the same power which raised Christ from the dead, it can also guarantee the resurrection of the believer.

³²Johannes Behm and Paul Feine, INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1966), p. 187.

The present activity of the Spirit in relation to the subject of faith, can be seen in that by making the believer aware of his/her future life, the Spirit gives with confidence.³³ "For on the one hand, along with faith the possibility of eschatological existence is given to all, and, on the other hand, this possibility must actualize itself in the concrete deed from case to case."³⁴ With the Spirit assuring the believer in the present that he/she has salvation, the Spirit then puts an ethical obligation upon the Christian to act in a way which is befitting his/her future righteousness. "Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you." (1 Thessalonians 4:8). Thus with the assurance of salvation, the Christian is then under the command to "walk becomingly as in the day" (Romans 13:13), not according to man nor after the flesh. Paul sees that by the Spirit making the eschatological factor of the gospel present, it places the believer under the imperative to act ethically, and not to use his/her freedom as a disregard for others.³⁵

In summarizing Paul's concept of the Holy Spirit, we can come to three conclusions. First, in order to understand Paul's view of the Spirit, it must be seen within

³³Hamilton, p. 33.

³⁴Bultmann, I, 337.

³⁵Ibid., I, 336-339.

a Christological context, "for the function of the Spirit is to reveal Christ to man, bind the believer to Christ, and impart to His own the risen Christ's life of resurrection and exaltation."³⁶ Secondly, Paul saw the Spirit as primarily an eschatological entity, since it is through the power of the Spirit that believers receive life in the future. And thirdly, although the Spirit is seen to be the source of life in the future, it is also the power which enables the disciple to live that future life in the present, placing an ethical obligation upon all believers.

D. Paul's Pneumatology and Pentecostal Doctrine

Now that we have had a fairly comprehensive look at Paul's concept of the Spirit, let us compare three Pentecostal³⁷ doctrines about the Spirit with Paul's Pneumatology. These doctrines are: (1) that in order to receive the fullness of the Spirit, one must fulfill the

³⁶Hamilton, p. 26.

³⁷It should be realized that there is a difference between Pentecostalism and Neo-Pentecostalism, or the Charismatic movement. Whereas Pentecostalism refers to classical Pentecostalism, as it emerged from the Holiness movements, Neo-Pentecostalism, or the Charismatic movement, refers to those who have experienced what classical Pentecostals call the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," but who have remained within their own denomination. Although my main concern is to help clear up many of the destructive doctrines as they are found within the Charismatic movement (since my main concern is with mainline denominations) I do

prerequisite of absolute obedience; (2) that the indwelling of the Spirit comes subsequent to water baptism; and (3) that evidence of the fullness of the Spirit is tongue-speaking.

Classical Pentecostalism states that a prerequisite for the indwelling of the Spirit is absolute obedience. Although different Pentecostal leaders would advocate different conditions in order to be recipients of the Spirit, they would all agree with the statement, "that as sinners we accept Christ, and as saints we accept the Holy Spirit."³⁸ Or to put it another way,

God's word as well as experience teaches us very clearly that it is possible to become a believer and to be baptized and to experience great joy in salvation ... i.e., to be a recipient of the work of the good Holy Spirit ... and nevertheless not yet to have received the gift of the Holy Spirit according to the new Testament understanding.³⁹

Pentecostalism holds this doctrine because of its view of the obstacle of sin. It holds that Holy Spirit and sin cannot abide in the same heart. So in order to be a recipient of the fullness of the Spirit, one must remove

consider it out of place to investigate classical Pentecostal doctrine. This is because many Charismatics find little aid from those within their own churches in helping them to understand their experience while at the same time having respect for their experience; and thus they are forced to seek help from outside their church, which usually leads them within Pentecostal circles and dogma.

³⁸ Bruner, pp. 95-96.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 96.

the obstacle of sin by obedience.

Not only is such a doctrine alien to the New Testament witness; it is especially foreign to Paul. To make absolute obedience the condition for the gift of the Spirit would be for Paul a return to the law, and to the curse of the law (which is death), and would nullify the redeeming work of Christ (Galatians 3:10-12). Rather than by way of the law, Paul sees the Holy Spirit as a free gift from Jesus Christ, to all who believe or have faith in Him.⁴⁰ Or as Paul writes "Does He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? (Galatians 3:5)

Such a doctrine of absolute obedience not only runs counter to Paul's concept of the Spirit, but it also tends to separate the Spirit from the person of Christ. This is done when Pentecostals say that you can receive the redeeming grace of Christ while not fully receiving the Spirit. Such a view tears apart the unity of the exalted Lord and the Spirit; for as we saw in the section on the Christological qualification of the spirit (p. 50), the Spirit has its identity only in Christ.⁴¹ Plus, "How is it possible to be Christians at all without having first received the Holy Spirit?" (Romans 8:9)

⁴⁰J. B. Huntley, PENTECOST AND THE HOLY SPIRIT (New York: Revell, 1928), pp. 120-121

⁴¹Bruner, p. 96

Therefore, we can conclude that such a doctrine of absolute obedience is completely foreign to the Pauline view of the Spirit. "For the ways of the law and gospel are two different ways. The one is the way of men to the Spirit; the other is the way of the Spirit to men."⁴²

Another Pentecostal doctrine which is similar in nature to the one discussed above is that the fullness of the Spirit comes subsequent to water baptism. While water baptism gives only salvation, the "baptism of the Spirit" completes whatever is lacking in conversion. Thus the "Spirit is not understood soteriologically, but dynamologically ... by being born again we become children of God, but by the baptism of the Spirit we become the soldiers of Christ."⁴³

Although Paul does not discuss the question of baptism of the Holy Spirit as being discrete from water baptism, Pentecostals presume that Paul took such a view for granted, and that he did not need to write about this issue since the churches he was writing to were already Apostolically founded churches, which took such teachings for granted.⁴⁴ But, to the student of Paul, such an assumption, rather than being inherent to Pauline thought,

⁴²Ibid., p. 228.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 73-74.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 68-69.

is extrinsic to Paul's pneumatology.

To Paul, the idea of a second baptism would be out of the question. The means of the Spirit can be nothing other than the message of Jesus Christ upon the cross for us: the message of faith. In the epistle to the Galatians, Paul reprimands those who believe that faith should be supplemented by a fuller obedience to God's will, and that such obedience would in return be honored by a fuller gift of the Spirit or salvation. Paul reminds the Galatians that they received the fullness of the Spirit in the very beginning (Galatians 3:2), and for them to seek a fuller gift of the Spirit was to turn away from the gospel.⁴⁵

The Pentecostal doctrine which is probably the greatest source of trouble for those within the Charismatic movement is that speaking in tongue is the initial evidence of the fullness of indwelling of the Spirit. Pentecostals believe it is necessary to speak in tongue because it gives the believer unquestionable assurance that the Holy Spirit has entered into his/her life.⁴⁶ This classical Pentecostal thought is that faith is not enough for receiving the gift of the Spirit, because faith is too vague or as Donald Gee put it at the 1955 Pentecostal

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 237-238

⁴⁶John Sherrill, THEY SPEAK IN OTHER TONGUES (New York: Waymark Books, 1968) pp. 78-100.

World Conference, speaking in tongues "made the baptism in the Holy Spirit a definite experience. Nothing was left to a vague 'taking by faith' with a hoped for change in character and power."⁴⁷ So, for Pentecostals to make the gift of the Spirit "a matter of faith alone is to endanger its experiential character."⁴⁸

What would Paul say to such a doctrine in light of his pneumatology? There can be no doubt that Paul would be furious, for such a practice is not the way of Christ's Gospel. As we saw in our study of 1 Corinthians 12:3 (p.51), Paul saw the classic work or evidence of the Holy Spirit in the simple, straight-forward confession that "Jesus is Lord."⁴⁹ It is not the purpose of the Spirit to draw attention to itself, as did the "dumb idols" that led the Corinthians astray before they became saints (1 Corinthians 12:2); but since the Spirit is the Spirit of the Lord, it is to give attention to Christ only. Thus, for Paul the speaking of tongues is not the primary evidence of the gift of the Spirit, rather the Spirit is only evident when it bears witness of Jesus Christ.

⁴⁷Pentecost: "A Pathway to Mental Health," PENTECOST MAGAZINE, No. 39 (December 1955), 10.

⁴⁸Bruner, p. 109.

⁴⁹Gunther Bornkamm, PAUL (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 180

E. Conclusion

There can be little doubt that the Neo-Pentecostal movement is here to stay. But whether its presence shall bring life to old institutional ways of thinking, which are often found within many mainline denominations, or whether it shall be a destructive agent causing upheaval within the churches it encounters ... depends upon how the Charismatics formulate their experiences and structure their theology about the Holy Spirit with the rest of Christian life and thought.

CHAPTER V

SOME PASTORAL GUIDELINES

In the prior chapters we have attempted to come to a better understanding of what the charismatic renewal is. In Chapter I we reviewed some of the causes which have brought about the conflict between charismatics and non-charismatics. In Chapter II the differences between Pentecostalism and the charismatic renewal were investigated. In Chapter III we studied the psychological aspects of the charismatic phenomenon: glossolalia. And in Chapter IV we examined Paul's theology of the Holy Spirit. In this chapter some pastoral guidelines will be proposed on how the local church can handle the charismatic renewal in a healthy and constructive manner. It should be kept in mind that these are only suggestions. They do not represent a laid-out program. This is because each church situation is different, calling on the local church to react to each situation in a fresh and creative way. But even though these guidelines are not a step-by-step program, if followed they will provide the pastor and congregation with a firm and constructive basis from which to act.

There are basically three ways in which a minister can react to the charismatic movement if it were to emerge within his/her parish. First, the pastor can advise the charismatic person(s) that they would probably feel more

relaxed in another church tradition, such as a Pentecostal Church. In such a church, they would find an atmosphere which is conducive to the exercising of the charismatic gifts. Or secondly, the minister can take a stance which would tolerate the existence of such a renewal, but would do nothing more. Or thirdly, the minister can affirm the charismatics and their experience and try to help them to integrate their experience into the life of the church. The first position is a negative one which wants nothing to do with the charismatic renewal. The second is a neutral stance, which hopes that the renewal will somehow fade away if it is tolerated and ignored. The third position is one of offering concern and help, hoping that tackling the issue head-on can save the church from destructive conflict. The pastoral guidelines which will be suggested in this chapter will take this third position as its basis.

In light of our study, this author would like to propose five guidelines for pastors: (1) That they seek first-hand knowledge of what the charismatic renewal is: (2) That they consciously seek to "build bridges" of communications; (3) That they affirm the charismatic's experience; (4) That they help the charismatic to interpret the experience in the light of sound theology; and (5) That they help the charismatic to find avenues of expression for his/her charismatic gifts. Let us look at each of these suggestions individually.

A. Seek Out First Hand Knowledge of the Charismatic Renewal

As was pointed out in chapter I, much of the tension raised by the charismatic renewal is brought about because pastors and laity alike often have inaccurate images of the charismatic renewal.

Many pastors confuse the charismatic renewal with classical Pentecostalism, fearing the elitism, legalism, and emotionalism of Pentecostalism will make a shambles of their parish. Some pastors, assuming that people who have charismatic or Pentecostal experiences are psychologically maladjusted or social misfits, fear that the charismatic renewal will flood their congregation with unstable people. Because of these and other impressions, some clergy respond to the emergence of charismatic renewal within their parish with panic. But if pastors would postpone judgment until they have studied the situation first-hand, they would free themselves of such anxiety. And once unchained from such undue fear, they would be free to respond to the charismatic movement, if it were to emerge within their congregation, in a creative and innovative manner.

In studying the charismatic movement the pastor must make an effort to study literature from both sides. He/she must avoid reading only what he/she agrees with. The list below would be a good start.

- Bruner, Frederick D. A Theology of the Holy Spirit. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1970.
- Gelpi, Donald L. Pentecostalism: A theological Viewpoint. New York: Paulist Press, 1971
- Hamilton, Michael P. The Charismatic Movement. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975.
- Jensen, Richard D. Touched by the Spirit. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1975.
- Kelsey, Morton T. Tongue Speaking. New York: Waymack Books, 1968.
- Kildahl, John P. The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues. New York: Harper and Ros, 1972.
- The Work of the Holy Spirit: (Report of the special committee on the work of the Holy Spirit), Philadelphia: United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1970. (Office of the General Assembly, 510 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia. PA-19107).

Also in the pastor's attempt to study the charismatic renewal he/she should attend some of their meetings, and talk with ministers who have successfully and constructively dealt with the charismatic renewal.

B. Building Bridges of Communication

If the pastor is to deal constructively with the charismatics who emerge within his/her parish, then the pastor must "build bridges" of communication through preaching and private conversations prior to the emergence of any charismatic activity within his/her parish. What is meant by "building bridges" is that the minister must present him/herself as one who is open and approachable.

What normally happens when a member of a mainline denominational church has a "charismatic experience" is that the person wants to share the excitement of the experience with others, and also wants to know how to understand and interpret it. The person's first response is normally to go to his/her pastor, since the pastor is supposed to be the "expert" about religious matters. But this can only happen if the pastor has been "building bridges," showing his/her parish that he/she is open and want to help. But if the pastor has reached or gotten the word around that he/she thinks the charismatic renewal is a farce, then the pastor is in for trouble. For example: If a minister of person "X" has preached from the pulpit that he/she disagrees with the charismatic renewal or is against it, and then person "X" were to have a "charismatic experience", person "X" would be afraid to go to the minister for help in interpreting the experience. This would drive person "X" underground. And if there were more than one who had a "charismatic experience," it would be very easy for this group to become divisive and suspicious of everything the pastor did. It would also force person "X" to go elsewhere for help. Often this leads the individual into Pentecostal circles, who accept person "X" with open arms, and give person "X" a Pentecostal explanation of the experience. Often such teachings run counter to mainline denominational thought, thus giving more fuel for conflict. But if the pastor were to show an openness

to the charismatic renewal in his/her preaching and conversations, and if person "X" were then to have a "charismatic experience," person "X" would most likely have no qualms in talking to his/her pastor. And then with the help of the pastor, person "X" would have a better chance in integrating his/her experience into the life of the church.

Thus the minister should consciously make an effort to "build bridges" of communication within his/her parish. This "building of bridges" will not only help the pastor in dealing with the charismatic renewal, but it will also allow him/her to be more available to other needs in his/her parish.

C. Affirm the Charismatic's Experience

If a pastor is going to be successful in handling the charismatic renewal in a healthy and constructive manner, then he/she must affirm the charismatic's experience. Unfortunately this has not always been the case. All too often people who have come to share and seek guidance from pastors about their experience have been turned-off by questions or statements that do not take seriously the person's experience. Rather than showing interest in the person and his/her experience, the pastor puts the person, with the experience, on the defensive. Often pastors do this

unconsciously. Believing the charismatic renewal to be divisive, and the experience a sign of a person's psychological maladjustment, such a reaction is only natural. (Hopefully such a response can be corrected by seeking out first-hand knowledge about the charismatic renewal).

When the charismatic's experience is questioned rather than affirmed, walls automatically go up. Normally the person who has just had the experience comes to the pastor, not because he/she doubts the reality of the experience, but because he/she needs help in understanding what the experience really means. But when the pastor approaches the person with statements or questions that portray doubt about the person's experience and its legitimacy, the charismatic naturally blocks him/herself from the pastor, saying "the pastor does not really understand what I am talking about." When this happens the pastor loses his/her credibility, and the charismatic goes elsewhere for help. Such a response from the pastor can also help the charismatic to polarize him/herself from the rest of the congregation and lead the charismatic to start making absolute claims about his/her experience.

This polarization provides a ready outlet for their anger. It can simply be projected, unacknowledged, out on 'them.' It's 'the others' who harbor ill will. 'We' simply want to help the church. This creates a self-destructive structure in which the charismatic cannot or will not see how he has elicited the very

reactions which he bewails. And the more intense the reactions are the more tightly the in-group is thrown together, huddling among themselves and like-minded friends for the camaraderie and love denied them by 'the world.' ...This devastating critique applies to every movement which feels itself embattled, whether it be black power or women's lib or the peace movement."¹

But when the pastor affirms the person's experience, even when he/she may not personally agree with it, two things are accomplished: (1) the pastor wins the trust and acceptance of the charismatic. This trust and acceptance keeps the movement from going underground and becoming divisive. And (2) it builds a bridge by which the pastor can help teach the charismatic person what this experience means to him/her personally, and what it means to the life of the church.

D. Helping the Charismatic to Interpret His/Her Experience

The most significant thing the pastor can do in dealing constructively with the charismatic renewal within his/her parish is to help the charismatic to interpret his/her experience in the light of sound theology. To do this the pastor must become a teacher.

As Donald Gelpi points out in his book

PENTECOSTALISM: A THEOLOGICAL VIEWPOINT, most enthusiasms

¹Walter Wink, Jesus named in the Charismatic Movement
UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY JOURNAL (June 1974) 6.

become divisive, not because the experience is not a healthy, or God-given experience, but rather because the experience is not interpreted properly. Whereas much suspicion about the charismatic renewal from those outside the movement is generated from the lack of accurate knowledge about the movement, the biggest source of conflict and tension from inside the renewal comes from the lack of theological competence demanded in order to give the movement, and its experiences an accurate interpretation. The charismatic renewal, like other enthusiasms, can either be a powder-keg, ready to blow the church wide-open, or it can be an agent of God's grace; it all depends on whether the experience is properly interpreted.

Morton Kelsey points out that because the charismatic experience is apt to engage the subconscious, it is also apt to evoke a greater amount of irrationality in those who have undergone the experience.² This irrationality often surfaces itself in the "exaggerated importance which comes to be attributed to this or that aspect of the Pentecostal experience."³ And this is apt to provoke the one who has had the experience to think that his/her experience "is the only and exhaustive criterion

²Donald L. Gelpi, PENTECOSTALISM: A THEOLOGICAL VIEWPOINT (New York: Paulist Press, 1971), p. 193.

³Ibid., pp. 193-194.

for what the charismatic experience can and should be.

(Such an) irrational and unreflective enthusiast is all too apt to dismiss every form of religious experience which is not identical with his own."⁴

When this kind of unreflective thinking and interpreting takes place, the enthusiast's religion is transformed into a stunting, rather than liberating influence. And "worst of all, by blindly identifying certain subjective feelings with the voice of the Spirit, the divisive enthusiast is often unable to distinguish between his own neurotic and aggressive impulses and the voice of God."⁵

Fortunately all this can be avoided with sound theological teachings. But in order to teach, the pastor must be able to engage the charismatic in dialogue. And this means that the minister must be able to win the trust and respect of the charismatic; thus the importance of suggestions B and C.

There are two important ingredients in helping the charismatic individual to come to an accurate and competent interpretation of his/her experience: First, the pastor should give the charismatic a solid Biblical foundation on which to base his/her interpretation; and secondly, the pastor should offer the charismatic person some pastoral guidelines, so that he/she can avoid the pit-falls of past

⁵Ibid

enthusiasms.

It is vital that the pastor give the charismatic a solid Biblical foundation. Oddly enough some pastors shy away from using the Bible when dealing with charismatics. But not to use the Bible as a tool for helping the charismatic to integrate and interpret his/her experience is a big mistake. It is true that charismatics do hold the Bible in high regard, and often this respect can lead the charismatic individual to a point where he/she considers the Scriptures to be verbally inspired by God.⁶ But "literalism" is not a common characteristic of the charismatic renewal. In fact Dennis Bennett states that on the whole, this phenomenon of "literalism" is non-existent within the Neo-Pentecostal movement. He goes on to say that for the charismatic renewal world-wide, it is only in the United States that one finds any substantial amount of "literalism."⁷

The pastor needs to understand that most charismatics hold the Bible in high regard not because they are literalists, but because to them the phenomenon they have

⁶This view of Scripture is normally not a direct result of the charismatic experience, but rather comes from the charismatic's association with "literalist" groups. This is why it is important for the pastor to deal directly and constructively with the charismatic who emerges within his/her parish: so as to avoid the divisiveness which can come from such views.

⁷Private interview with Dennis Bennett.

experienced is closely related to the experience of the "Risen Christ" shared by those in the New Testament. Hence they feel a special nearness to those depicted in the New Testament. Thus, because of this high respect charismatics have toward the Bible, especially the New Testament, the Bible can serve as a valuable tool in helping the charismatic to understand and interpret his/her experience properly.

Chapter IV of this paper, A THEOLOGY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, can serve as a model for pastors attempting to give charismatics a proper Biblical foundation from which to understand and interpret their experience. Such a comprehensive study allows the minister to aid the charismatic to see the proper place his/her experience has within Christianity as a whole. The pastor should also stress the ethical implications of the charismatic experience. In this way the pastor can help to harness the energy and enthusiasm the charismatic phenomenon produces in people, thus preventing the experience from becoming an end in itself.

With a solid Scriptural foundation on which to stand, the pastor should then proceed to offer the charismatic some pastoral guidelines, so that the charismatic can avoid the pit-falls and divisiveness of past enthusiasms. The following are some helpful guide-

lines for charismatics: (1) Do not be obnoxious. The pastor should stress that the experience the person has had is wonderful. Encourage the person to enjoy it and share it, but not to force it upon others. "If (you) have the real McCoy, (we'll) see it and feel it, but too many superlative words turn people off."⁸ (2) The pastor should stress that the Word is communicated in acts of kindness, gestures of grace, and signs of mercy. Remind the individual that the fruits of the Spirit are: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control (Galatians 5:22). (3) Reassure the person that it is ok to make mistakes. The pastor should be careful that the charismatic experience does not become a source for perfectionism. (4) The pastor should stress that the charismatic should study, pointing out that there is basically no argument about the reality of the individual's experience, but the charismatic must seek to learn all he/she can about the Holy Spirit, so that he/she can break-down communication barriers. And (5) the charismatic should be warned that in the past dogmatism, elitism and extremism have caused many movements of the Spirit to turn divisive. Emphasize the importance of keeping the charismatic renewal from becoming divisive, for

⁸Robert C. Whittaker, HANG IN THERE (Plainfield, New Jersey: Logos International, 1974), p. 15.

only in this way can it be of service to the Church, and the furtherance of God's kingdom on earth.

E. Help the Charismatic to Exercise His/Her Gift(s)

And lastly, in dealing constructively with the charismatic renewal it is important that the pastor allows the charismatic individual to exercise his/her gift(s). To do this the pastor should encourage the charismatic to attend a midweek prayer meeting. If the pastor feels secure enough he/she can instigate his/her own midweek gathering for charismatics, (non-charismatics should be made welcome too). The purpose for encouraging the charismatic to attend midweek charismatic meetings is so that the charismatic will not feel that the pastor is trying to "cramp" his/her style. Also, by encouraging the charismatic individual to attend such midweek services, the pastor allows the charismatic to mature. Normally after the initial "charismatic experience" the individual is full of enthusiasm, and can sometimes appear to be over-zealous or self-righteous, but as time wears on the charismatic individual who is able to exercise his/her gift(s) begins to mature, and the rough edges are smoothed over. When this takes place the charismatic can become a real blessing to the Church.

F. Conclusion

Today the charismatic renewal is to be found in all churches, no matter what the denomination. Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant churches alike have witnessed its emergence in the past ten years. This "movement of the Spirit" also has no respect for national boundaries. Throughout the world it has been reported to be making significant progress.

At first many scholars and pastors looked upon the charismatic renewal as just a fad: here today and gone tomorrow. But this seems no longer to be the case. Many are coming to realize that the charismatic renewal is here to stay. Martin Marty, in an interview on the future of the Church, stated that the future Church will become increasingly charismatic in nature.⁹ Because of this, and because of the renewal's present strength within the historical churches it becomes all the more important that we, the clergy, learn to handle this enthusiasm in a healthy and creative manner. Whether this renewal is allowed to bring new life to the Church, or whether it becomes just another divisive enthusiasm depends upon how the local church reacts to this phenomenon of the Spirit.

⁹Martin Marty, CATALYST TAPES (Waco, Texas: special edition 1975-97).

It is the hope of this author that this paper will help the Church deal with the charismatic renewal.

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